END-LINE EVALUATION SUPPORT TO STABILIZATION II PROGRAM

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ACRONYMS

CRESTA/A	Community Recovery and Extension of State Authority and Accountability
DA	District Administrations
DG	Director General
FCV	Fragility, Conflict and Violence
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FMS	Federal Member States
KII	Key Informant Interview
MOF	Ministry of Finance
MOIFAR	Ministry of Interior, Federal Affairs and Reconciliation
UN	United Nations Multi Partners Trust Fund
MPTF	UN Multi-Partner Trust Fund
PBF	UN Peace Building Fund
S2SII	Support to stabilization II Program
TIS+	Transition Initiatives to Stabilization
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
USAID	United States Assistance to International Development
UNSOM	United Nations Assistance Mission Somalia

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

UNDP has sought the assistance of an external consultant to carry out the final evaluation of the Support to Stabilization II project. This draft final report represents the second deliverable of this assignment. The S2SII project is a national window project led by the Federal Government of Somalia and funded by the UN Peace Building Fund (PBF) through the United Nations Multi-Partners Trust Fund (UN MPTF). The project was jointly implemented during October 2018 until February 2021 by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the United Nations Assistance Mission Somalia (UNSOM) through its Community Recovery and Extension of State Authority and Accountability (CRESTA/A), the Ministries of Interior, Federal Affairs and Reconciliation (MoIFAR), and Finance (MoF) of the Federal Government of Somalia, the Federal Member States and District Administrations.

The S2S II project was the centerpiece of the UN's support to the National Stabilization Strategy and is crucial for enabling the role of the Ministry of Interior, Federal Affairs and Reconciliation as the lead government ministry. The project built upon the first phase of the Support to Stabilization (S2S) project, which operated from 2015 to 2018.

This evaluation was severely constrained by multiple challenges, including a tense and uncertain political situation, the ongoing COVID-19 global pandemic, the Ramadan period, which limited the availability of local stakeholders and counterparts, a long period of inactivity between the last program activities and the evaluation and significant turnover within the implementing agencies. Despite this fact, the consultant conducted over 100 hours of interviews with those stakeholders who agreed to participate and as a result has been able to formulate an opinion regarding the project and its implementation.

Overall, this evaluation finds that the project was unsuccessful in achieving its development objectives. Nonetheless, the operation was and remains **relevant** to the Somali environment, the situation of districts and the circumstances of different stakeholders. In preparing the project, care was placed to aligning it with national development priorities as highlighted by key strategic frameworks, such as: The National Development Plan 2017-2019, The National Stabilization Strategy, The New Partnership for Somalia and The Security Pact and Transition plan. Additionally, project preparation, based on the information available, suitably addressed conflict drivers and factors for peace at the district level and through conflict analysis, and the design of the project appropriately focused on gender, youth and marginalized communities' inclusion in reconciliation and the political process at the local level.

However, the project relied on overly optimistic assumptions in defining its theory of change, did not have sufficient capacity to oversee project implementation. Despite its strategic alignment, the project had a difficult implementation period marked by significant and sometimes unforeseen disruptions. Accordingly, project contribution to country program document outputs and outcomes such as the UN Strategic Framework, the SDGs, and national development priorities should, thus far, be considered limited. The project supported many counterpart agencies but was unable to catalyze sufficiently additional funding to make a difference.

Accordingly, the amounts the project was able to direct to each agency was limited and this impacted on the project's effectiveness.

Nonetheless the project has pioneered financing through the National Window with generally positive results. Accordingly, it transferred money to local levels of government and this experiment has paved the way for other projects to use the National window, although management and oversight capacity must be significantly improved for this experiment to remain relevant. Improving effectiveness will require strengthening management and oversight of the project both within MOIFAR, the FMS Ministries of Interior and districts to enable the project to become more agile in responding, within its conceptual framework, quickly and more effectively to the circumstances of each district on the ground. UNDP resources and knowledge in this process are important and its contribution to the institutional development process is essential. Accordingly, even when it is not leading the implementation, its advisory role should remain significant to ensure that it can provide thematic guidance and technical assistance support as the capacity of the managing institution improves.

The project should only be considered **inefficient**, although this inefficiency cannot be attributed solely to the project. The implementation period has seen significant disruptions which could have not been foreseen during preparation – only one of which was the COVID-19 pandemic. The project deployed resources although their ability to carry out their functions was limited as did the ability of MOIFAR to oversee it. The project also saw a significant turnover in staff, both on accounts of changes in MOIFAR and the limited project activity, this further limited the efficiency of the project. In terms of achieving stabilization, it is especially important to ensure not just that there is alignment between the different operations, but that there is coordination.

By sharing information and coordinating execution, including the use and allocation of human capital in hard-to-reach places, resources can be better used to address the needs of the local populations and this in turn reflects positively on Somali institutions and development partners. This is easier said than done. The evaluator recognizes that Inter-project cooperation across implementing partners and even within agency is an age-old problem, especially in FCV affected countries. In carrying out this evaluation, however the evaluator cannot help to note that the repercussions of a coordination failures in this thematic area are much more significant since the progress that is achieved is fragile. If projects operating in the same conceptual space can support each other better, the likelihood of sustainability drastically increases.

Most notably, the evaluation recommends focusing care and attention in ensuring a smooth "graduation" and handover between stabilization programs focused on achieving reconciliation and laying the foundation for effective local governance and those more focused on service delivery. These projects should be considered as providing a continuum in technical assistance and by focusing on "handover modalities" projects can ensure that districts evolve at their own pace and receive the type of support that they require in the amounts that they require to achieve project objectives.

Given all that is discussed above, the evaluation concludes that at this stage, **sustainability of project achievements is unlikely, and its impact is limited.** Nonetheless, with some design

changes and a significant increase in oversight and management capacity, this type of project remains important, if not essential, to ensure the continued stabilization of Somali territory in its ongoing struggle against Al-Shabaab.

The evaluation has three principal recommendations:

- First, to treat a stabilization project as the initial step in the institutional development process. While peace and stabilization activities are distinct in both content and scope from institutional development and governance activities, it is important to note that what happens prior to the formalization of institutions is as important as what occurs after as effective stabilization seems to lead to smoother institutional development. This has operational implications in terms of who leads stabilization operations and how the institutional development component is addressed, but also the sequencing of activities and the evolution from stabilization to institutional development.
- Second, a high level of coordination and cooperation is required for this type of intervention to achieve results. This is a complex project, with many moving parts and multiple stakeholders who have varying levels of awareness and experience in managing these operations. Implementing agencies and development partners must maintain a consistent and unified messaging around project activities if they are to succeed.
- Third, while recourse to the National window may have a positive impact in reducing the cumbersome bureaucracy around disbursements of funds, it is important to recognize that the capacity of the implementing agency to provide substantive thematic support must also be monitored. This means taking a proactive approach to maintain effective oversight and technical assistance support to the implementing partner. In plain language, national window projects at this stage of institutional development require more technical assistance and oversight than traditionally financed projects, not less.
- Fourth, carrying out a stabilization/institutional development project in a volatile, quickly changing environment requires that the project is capable to receive and absorb information regarding the situation on the ground and be flexible enough to adjust implementation according to circumstances. This has operational implications in terms of the governance structure that projects of this kind should adopt.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

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1.1   Context and Background

Somalia is the easternmost country in the African continent. Located on the Horn of Africa, it extends from just south of the Equator northward to the Gulf of Aden and occupies a strategic geopolitical position between sub-Saharan Africa and the countries of Arabia and southwestern Asia1. Over the years, instability and conflict in Somalia have had significant repercussions, among other dimensions, on global commerce and the security situation of all its direct and indirect neighbors: Ethiopia, Djibouti, Kenya, Uganda, and Yemen to name the most significant. Restoring peace and stability in Somalia as well functioning and inclusive institutions is not just a national and humanitarian priority, but a global one.

Somalia's political, geographic, and social context create challenges to the restoration of a functional state in the national territory.

Somalia is a country of geographic extremes. The climate is mainly dry and hot, with landscapes of thornbush savanna and semidesert. About three-fifths still follow a mobile way of life, pursuing nomadic pastoralism or agropastoralism. Additionally, the country is particularly vulnerable to climatic shocks which have periodically created cycles of floods and droughts and have led large populations to move from their areas of origin to other localities to avoid starvation. There is now considerable evidence that population movements create social tensions between the host population and IDP and a competition for economic resources which government, under the best of circumstances, manage with difficulty. Over the past year or so, the country in addition to the double impact of conflict, drought and floods has endured an invasion of locusts which has further reduced agricultural output and induced populations to move about. The combination of these shocks during the period of project implementation have exacerbated the need to move the

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1 Encyclopedia Britannica

country away from a situation of war (or near war) to a more stable environment where functioning institutions can address the other humanitarian emergencies that periodically afflict the country.

Figure 1: The Administrative Map of Somalia
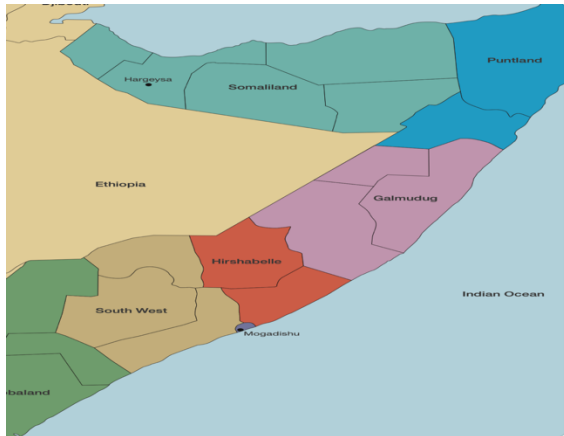
While the population is homogeneous, it is highly factionalized. This has made the concept of Somali nationhood a powerful yet mostly aspirational objective. In fact, The Somali people are clan-based Muslims and, to date, at no point in their history have they been successfully able to transcend clan identity and develop an inclusive national project. The path towards stabilization must take this into account and vie for an affordable and sustainable model of governance that works with these historic, climatic, and geographic realities.

A political history characterized by effective local governance, loose and consensual association of local interests and significant factionalism.

The settlement of Somalia can probably traced-back to antiquity as far as to "the land of Punt", an ancient kingdom known for its trading activity with Ancient Egypt for which there is written evidence. There is more concrete evidence that Arab traders in the 9th century founded many of the major coastal towns as trading cities dealing in gold, leather, ivory, and slaves. While information on the political arrangements of these cities is limited, it paints the picture of relatively peaceful and largely independent Islamic centers dedicated to trade and ruled by diverse councils of elders who ruled consensually, a model that is relevant today. These city-states were impressively diverse and apparently well-ruled, they were not very centralized. Councils did not levy taxes and never controlled the hinterlands. These city-states entered opportunistic loose alliances between them.

Subsequent periods saw an expansion of the radius of activity of Somali nomads into the hinterlands[2] – although the model of governance remained largely unchanged, the population residing in this expanding Somali national space became more diverse. Fractionalization remained an essential characteristic of the governance system and achieving consensus remained a laborious and mostly transactional process[3].

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2 Countering the al-Shabaab Insurgency in Somalia: Lessons for U.S. Special Operations Forces – Joint Special Operations University, Feb 2014
3 Source: Britannica. Com "The Somali people make up most of the Somalia's population. They are divided into numerous clans, which are groups that trace their common ancestry back to a single father. These clans, which in turn are subdivided into numerous subclans, combine at a higher level to form clan families. The clan families inhabiting the interfluvial area of southern Somalia are the Rahanwayn and the Digil, which together are known as the Sab. Mainly farmers and agropastoralists, the Sab include both original inhabitants and numerous Somali groups that have immigrated into this climatically favourable area. Other clan families are the Daarood of northeastern Somalia, the Ogaden, and the border region between Somalia and Kenya; the Hawiye, chiefly inhabiting the area on both sides of the middle Shabeelle and south-central Somalia; and the Isaaq, who live in the central and western parts of northern Somalia. In addition, there are the Dir, living in the northwestern corner of the country but also dispersed throughout southern Somalia, and the Tunni, occupying the stretch of coast between Marca and Kismaayo. Toward the Kenyan

The colonial period, starting from the 19th century did not change the dynamics much. Multiple colonial powers competed in Somalia, but none in a sustainable fashion contributed to develop a sustainable alternative model of governance. Interests of colonial powers in Somalia changed over time and attempts to develop an institutional system capable to credibly govern the totality of the territory remained timid and limited. Factionalization remained a key element of the governance makeup and clans maintained the predominant role in identity politics.

Historically intense Inter-clanic rivalry, further exacerbated by post-colonial experience

The post-colonial experience is limited, effectively lasting only twenty-nine years before the country descended into civil war. The Republic of Somalia was formed in 1960 by the federation of a former Italian colony and a British protectorate, each with its own administrative and governance tradition. Initially highly democratic the political system reflected the high factionalization of society as evidenced by the more than 1,000 candidates representing 64 parties (mostly clan-based) who contested the 123 seats in the National Assembly in the last democratic elections in 1969[4].

Yet Somalia's democratic experiment lasted only nine years and was replaced by Mohamed Siad Barre's dictatorial rule over the country from October 1969 until January 1991, when he was overthrown in a bloody civil war waged by clan-based guerrillas. Internally, following the socialist development model, Barre can be said to have worked to create a national Somali identity by nationalizing resources, centralizing power, and trying to undercut the clan system. Rural society was integrated into this totalitarian governance structure through regional committees on which clan elders were placed under the authority of a chairman, who was invariably an official of the state apparatus. Clan loyalties were officially outlawed, and clan-inspired behavior became a criminal offense.

However, many Somalis believe that Barre favored his clan, the Darod[5],—especially in the allocation of government positions and access to the levers of power. This form of nepotism, combined with violent repression and widespread human rights abuses against groups thought to be hostile to his rule over time. Repression against dissent and against clan activity was extremely violent and only emboldened resistance to Barre's rule. In fact, state presence over the territory was rather tenuous. Investments in Infrastructure such as roads, especially outside of Mogadishu remained extremely limited with most of the country devoid of reliable access to basic services and economic opportunities. Outside the boundaries of the formal State's political system, the clan system remained strong and taking advantage of the limited control of state institutions over the territory clan-aligned rebel militias appeared throughout the country, eventually overthrowing Barre's regime.

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border the narrow coastal strip and offshore islands are inhabited by the Bagiunis, a Swahili fishing people. One economically significant minority is the several tens of thousands of Arabs, mainly of Yemenite origin. Another economically important minority is the Bantu population, which is mainly responsible for the profitable irrigation agriculture practiced on the lower and middle reaches of the Jubba and Shabeelle rivers. Many Bantu are the descendants of former slaves, and socially they are regarded as inferior by other groups in Somalia. The result is a strict social distinction between the "noble" Somali of nomadic descent and the Bantu groups. There is also a small Italian population in Somalia".

4 Countering the al-Shabaab Insurgency in Somalia: Lessons for U.S. Special Operations Forces – Joint Special Operations University, Feb 2014

5 Specifically, three sub-clans—the Ogaden, Marehan, and Dulbahante

The impact of Barre's tenure on governance is significant. On the one hand it created a moderately competent central government administration with its own traditions and culture but very limited reach. Even though the institutions were severely damaged by the civil war, many of the current employees of the dilapidated Somali administration remain in the system and have only known the Barre system. On the other hand, central government administration is associated with the use of the State to benefit one clan/sub-clans over others. Memories of human rights abuses remain vivid, and this heritage continues to tarnish the reputation of the formal government as it attempts to reclaim the territory.

After Siad's fall from power, civil war ensued. Over the next thirty years, in the absence of a centralized power, clans who had been suppressed filled the void and retook primacy. Outside Mogadishu, all the main clans with access to the vast stores of military equipment in the country set up their own spheres of influence. Government in the south largely disintegrated while a de facto government declared the formation of an independent Republic of Somaliland in the north in 1991 and in 1998 the region of Puntland (the Puntland State of Somalia) in the northeast proclaimed its autonomy.

In the absence of an established institutional national authority, organizations who are perceived deliver key basic services have been able to exert authority

Attempts to achieve peace and reconstruct a unified Somali Government in its territory intensified in the beginning of the 21st century, although until 2012 they had limited success. In response to the lack of an effective government and the resulting insecurity, alternate forms of authority began to grow in Somalia. Concurrently with clans, starting in the 1990s radical Islamic groups began to operate in Somalia and are currently manifesting themselves through Al Shabab.

Despite their oppressive and generally unpopular brand of Islamism, to this day, these groups derive a measure of support from Somalis because they deliver certain social services, such as education, opening boarding schools for poor children and providing food to a population struggling to survive a famine. Additionally, they secured some Somalis' tolerance or even support by imposing cruel but more even-handed justice and a measure of security in areas under their control.

The stabilization of Somalia and the legitimation of the Federal model of governance depends on its ability to be seen as transparently and inclusively deliver services.

The root causes of the conflict in Somalia are long-standing, multiple, and interrelated. It is equally clear that successfully addressing identity politics, improving management and access to economic resources and public employment, and incorporating minorities and women more fully into the social and economic makeup of society are fundamental elements of successful stabilization.

Equally important is establishing the legitimacy and credibility of "formal governance" structures amongst the population- especially in places where the formal state has never had a presence or where the perception of the as a partial actor benefitting some to the detriment of others. This is

a challenging task, especially given the level of destruction, both physical and institutional that the country has suffered over the past thirty years. Somali authorities and population continue to face the threat posed by Al- Shabab daily, which has effectively reconstituted its operations as a rural insurgency and maintains control a significant number of district centers. Their control of key areas is restricting travel between Government controlled areas, and from their base, they continue to mount terrorist attacks in urban areas. In so doing they have, successfully thus far, undermined capacity of the Government to establish services to the population and along with it have undermined the credibility of "formal institutions" vis-à-vis the population.

Yet despite its difficulties, Somalia has made genuine progress on several fronts since the formal end of the civil war in 2012. These include advances in the design of a new institutional framework, with the creation of four new federal states6; significant investments in community projects and local governance; and the achievement of some -albeit tenuous- element of security at least in parts of the territory which have been reclaimed from Al-Shabab. But these achievements are quickly reversible unless state institutions, whether economic, political, military, or judicial reclaim legitimacy. Partisan, corrupt, and opportunistic politics in the past fueled internal dissatisfaction, caused grievance and a deep sense that central powers were biased and 'unfair' leading to deep levels of suspicion.

Poor Governance gives Al-Shabab strong arguments to retain the allegiance of many among the population it governs, despite its harsh rule. The Government has now developed significant capacity on matters of security and defense, accordingly foreign provision of security is winding down. In cooperation with its international partners, Somalia has developed a Transition Plan to guide the handover process from AMISOM-provided security to Somali forces over a four- year period. The Transition Plan is of significant political importance and *stabilization*7 is crucial for the legitimacy of the Somali state and the long-term peaceful development of the country. As the Federal Government of Somalia militarily reclaims territory from Al Shabab, its capacity to sustainably maintain control requires enlisting the support of the local populations.

The stabilization plan calls for addressing the governance issue at different levels. As the country continues to work on developing effective national institutions through the process of constitutional reforms, amongst others, gains in legitimacy can be achieved by providing transparently inclusive access to basic services at the local level without resorting to the oppressive and highly unpopular methods employed by Al-Shabab. The approach relies on several hypotheses, one of which is that the creation of functional administration at the district level, and the election of district councils will provide legitimacy to these new local institutions. It is in this context that the Support to Stabilization project is operating.

International experience suggests that Stabilization Support Programs have been difficult to implement

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6 The Federal Member States are Galmaduug, Hirshabelle, Jubbaland and South West
7 The US State Department defined stabilization as: "We define stabilization as a political endeavor involving an integrated civilian-military process to create conditions where locally legitimate authorities and systems can peaceably manage conflict and prevent a resurgence of violence."

In the context of this evaluation, we refer to stabilization support programs as those interventions aimed at local populations that are put in place to complement military interventions[8]. Those are generally focused on interventions aimed to resolve issues generating conflict among the populations, raising awareness about the advantages of peace, creating collaborative networks between the private sector and civil society, and supporting actions to develop inclusive local institutions capable to deliver services to local populations, thus increasing the credibility of these local institutions. Multiple stabilization-support programs were carried out in parallel by different development partners in Somalia, including one supported by USAID[9] and one supported by the Finnish Cooperation[10]. Stabilization-support programs have had, in general mixed success.

These programs have worked in parallel with S2S, focusing less on district council formations but focusing more on sensitizing populations and providing funds for infrastructure development programs, most notably in Afmadown, Barawe and Wanlaweyne and Kismayo.

There is growing evidence that, given time, and with adequate financial support, and significant advice and oversight from international stakeholders, these programs can facilitate the development of inclusive institutions, but their outcome vary widely depending on the mix and quality of the inputs and the local circumstances. International experience has shown that institutional patience on the part of development agencies is limited, and that frequent redirections of these programs have limited their effectiveness. Achieving a balance has proven challenging, irrespective of the implementing agency.

In Somalia, the current wave of stabilization programs has started in 2015, roughly two years after the approval of the Provisional Constitution and before the formation of one of the Federal Member states. On matters of institutional development, progress has ebbed and flowed, with a slow and often conflictual process of allocation of powers between the Federal Government and the Federal Member States[11]. This is therefore a critical period, while it is sufficient time to carry out a more comprehensive evaluation of stabilization interventions, it is probably not enough time to record sustainable impact on the ground. Since 2015, a significant amount of land has been

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8 There appears to be limited consensus as to what Stabilization entails (Source: Defining the Boundaries of UN Stabilization Missions, Aditi Gorur, Stimson 2016) – Moreover, "As a result of the analysis of the mandates of MONUSCO, MINUSMA and MINUSCA, UN stabilisation was defined as follows: UN Stabilization operations aim to help states in crisis to restore order and stability in the absence of a peace agreement, by using force as well as political, developmental and other means to help national and local authorities to contain aggressors (as identified in the relevant UNSC resolutions), enforce law and order and to protect civilians, in the context of a larger process that seeks a lasting political solution to the crisis. "Implications of stabilisation mandates for the use of force in UN peace operations"- Norwegian Institute of International Affairs, 21 February 2018

9 USAID Country Development Cooperation Strategy (Cdcs) - Somalia, 2020-2025. TIS+ prioritizes engagement with government and communities within the Jubbaland State of Somalia, Southwest State of Somalia, Benadir Regional Authority, and the Sool and Sanaag regions. The TIS+ activities focus on increasing stability in the country by improving the government's capacity for service delivery and demonstrating good governance processes, thereby improving citizen confidence in government and reducing the appeal of violent extremism.

10 Finland's country strategy for Somalia 2021–2024, Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland.

11 Local Governments operate in a gray area: the provisional constitution specifically mention local governments and allocate it squarely under the supervision of the federal member states, but ongoing constitutional discussions have not resolved the issue of the Federal Government responsibility vis-à-vis local governments. In practice, since federal member states have not yet gained sufficient capacity to effectively manage the relationship with local districts, the federal government and federal member states cooperate to support the development of local governments, with the bulk of the management and administration falling to the Federal Government and the strategic implementation and coordination falling under the purview of Federal Member States.

reclaimed by the Government of Somalia from insurgents, but this progress is fragile, and several districts have in fact reverted back to Al-Shabab[12].

In 2018, The United States Department of State, concurrently with USAID assessed its stabilization support activities. It concluded that stabilization operations should be revamped to address some of the shortcomings in the implementation of these activities. The review found that while the principles for effective stabilization have been widely studied, they have not always been systematically applied and institutionalized. Accordingly, the performance of U.S. stabilization efforts has consistently been limited by the lack of strategic clarity, organizational discipline, and unity of effort in how we approach these missions. The following findings may be of use in the evaluation of the S2SII program. It concluded that **Stabilization requires adaptive and targeted engagement at subnational and national levels.** More important than dollars spent is having a singular, agreed-upon, strategic approach to unify efforts in support of a consolidated local impact executed through sequenced and contextual assistance.

To do so, the report proposed:

- Establishing a U.S.-Government wide definition of stabilization.
- Developing and evaluating political strategies based on evidence and rigorous analysis.
- Promote a fair, purposeful division of labor with national partners and international donors.
- Clarify agency roles and responsibilities to improve performance and reduce duplication.
- Improve the capacity of our civilian workforce to address stabilization needs in tandem with the U.S. military and partner forces; and
- Sequencing and targeting assistance to conflict-affected areas in a more measured fashion.

Source: Stabilization Assistance Review: A Framework for Maximizing the Effectiveness of U.S. Government Efforts to

Box 1: Findings from Stabilization Assistance Review Program of the US Government

1.1.2   Project Background

The operation under review is the second in a series. The original S2S project, which was implemented between 2015 and 2018 was conceived to enable the Ministry of Interior, Federal Affairs and Reconciliation to support the establishment of caretaker administrations in up to 25 districts anticipated to be recovered from Al-Shabaab in the south-central regions[13]. The S2SII project was designed to build on the momentum created by the first phase and expand the support to new areas under government control to promote reconciliation and facilitate the extension of state authority and accountability to the district-level. The second phase began operation in 2018 and closed in February 2021.

The **objective** of the project was to strengthen the coordination and stabilization capacities at Ministry of Interior, Federal Affairs and Reconciliation (MoIFAR) of the Federal Government of Somalia and in the Ministries of Interior at the Federal Member States. Additionally, the project supported the establishment of basic administrative functions at the district level across the

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[12] While the conflict lines front lines have remained fairly consistent during the life of the project, there have been changes with Al-Shabab extending its governance in rural areas in the southwest. Certain districts that had been reclaimed by the government reverted back to Al-Shabab.

13 These regions later became the four new Federal Member States of Jubaland, South West, Hirshabelle and Galmudug

federal system based upon an inclusive approach. The **expected outcome** was to provide District level administration support to ensure a functional level of local to strengthen the overall perception of legitimacy of the state.

1.2   The Final Evaluation

While the project may not be the largest in development partners portfolio, lessons from its implementation are important to facilitate Somalia's path out of institutional dysfunction. Despite overall progress, stabilization remains work in progress, and it is important that lessons learned be used to further improve the design of similar projects.   Additionally, the project pilots a different approach to delivery of assistance lessons from its implementation will be useful to both the governments of Somalia and to many development partners who will be employing similar assistance delivery models.

Given what is described above, this evaluation was both **backwards and forward-looking**. While the overall purpose and objective of the final evaluation is to assess the extent of the project intervention results at outcome and impact levels it was particularly attentive in highlighting lessons that can be usefully drawn from the project experience and how these can be operationalized in the future. The principal review questions are included in Annex 2 of this final report

1.2.1   Scope of the Evaluation

The final evaluation evaluated the extent to which the S2S design, implementation strategy and project results have contributed to changes in the peacebuilding and stabilization environment. The evaluation required reviewing the project experience from multiple dimensions and through multiple lenses. The consultant assessed impacts and results at the federal level, at the level of Federal Member States and at the district level and with civil society. Annex 2 gives a detailed list of the people interviewed. The evaluation responded to evaluation questions based on both the OECD DAC evaluation criteria as well as PBF specific evaluation criteria.

1.2.2   Methodology

The consultant conducted the evaluation in four steps, as described in Figure 1:

Inception	Information Gathering	Analysis and Recommendations	Dissemination
• Meet Client • Gather information • Define Approach to the methodology • Prepare an Inception Report	• Collect available written information regarding the program • Carry out online surveys • Conduct Semi-structured individual interviews and focus groups with key stakeholders	• Develop Analysis framework, • Analyze data gathered • Provide recommendations • Prepare a draft final report	• Elicit feedback regarding the analysis and recommendations • Conduct a dissemination workshop • Prepare a final report

Figure 2: Methodology used to conduct the evaluation

Table 1:Specific Evaluation Questions

RELEVANCE		
R1	To what extent was the project in line with the national development priorities-	Document Review (National Development Plan (NDP), the Wadajir Framework, Stabilization Strategy, UN Strategic Plan, SDG
R2	To what extent has the project been appropriately responsive to the political, social, security, institutional capacity, etc. changes in the country?	Document Review and progress reports KIIs, Case studies
R3	Was the project relevant in addressing conflict drivers and factors for peace identified in a conflict analysis?	Document Review: Conflict Analysis
R4	Was the project appropriate and strategic to the main peacebuilding goals and challenges in the country at the time of the PBF project's design? Did relevance continue throughout implementation?	KII, Survey, Focus Groups
R5	To what extent did the project achieve its overall objectives? Did the project provide the necessary support to the target government institutions as outlined in the project document?	KII
R6	To what extent did the project contribute to gender equality, the empowerment of women and the human rights-based approach? Specifically, the evaluation will measure if the gender marker of the project was in line with the achieved results.	KII, Surveys, Focus Group
R7	What and how much progress has been made towards achieving the overall outputs and outcomes of the project, including contributing factors and constraints?	KII, Survey
R8	Were the inputs and strategies identified appropriate and adequate to achieve the results? Were they realistic? Was the project relevant in terms of addressing identified needs?	KII, Surveys, FGD
EFFECTIVENESS		
E1	To what extent did the project contribute to the country program document outputs and outcomes, UN Strategic Framework, the SDGs, and the national development priorities?	**Document Review**
E2	Describe the management processes and their appropriateness in supporting delivery	Document Review, KII
E3	How did the project funding level and resource mobilization affect project? implementation?	Document Review, KII
E4	To what extent did the project's M&E mechanism contribute to meeting project results?	Document Review, KII
EFFICIENCY		
F1	To what extent have the project implementation strategy and execution been efficient and cost-effective?	Document Review, M&E, KII
F2	How efficient was the overall staffing, planning and coordination within the project and external partners?	Document Review, KII
F3	How efficiently did the project use the project board? How well did the project team communicate with implementing partners, stakeholders, and project beneficiaries on its progress?	Document Review, KII

SUSTAINABILITY AND IMPACT		
SO1	Assess the extent to which the results are likely to continue with specific focus on national capacity and ownership over the process.	KII
S02	To what extent do stakeholders support the project's long-term objectives?	KII
S03	Did the intervention design include an appropriate sustainability and exit strategy? (Including promoting national/local ownership, use of national capacity etc.) to support positive changes in peacebuilding after the end of the project?	Document Review, KII,
SO4	How strong is the commitment of the Government and other stakeholders to sustaining the results of PBF support and continuing initiatives, especially women's participation in decision making processes, supported under PBF Project?	KII, FGD
SO5	How has the project enhanced and contributed to the development of national capacity to ensure suitability of efforts and benefits? To what extent are the benefits of the project likely to be sustained after the completion of this project?	KII, FGD
S06	What knowledge transfer took place during the project implementation that will guarantee government institutions will play their role when the project is closed?	KII
S07	Describe the main lessons that have emerged. What are the recommendations for similar support in the future? (The recommendations should provide comprehensive proposals for future interventions based on the current evaluation findings).	KII

In the inception phase, the consultant interacted with the client (UNDP and PBF) associated with the evaluation to finalize evaluation questions (Table 1), prepare an agenda of meetings, prepare information-gathering instruments and make the logistical arrangements required to conduct the next phases of the evaluation.   The inception phase lasted approximately two weeks. The Information gathering phase included three key activities: the collection of written documentation, second the consultant conducted semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders, third he gathered information via an online survey and fourth focus groups with key groups of stakeholders. The information gathering phase was protracted[14] given the difficulty that we faced in acquiring data and carrying out interviews. Once the information gathered, the consultant carried out the actual evaluation of the project. The analysis phase was conducted over the period of three weeks. In the last phase the findings were discussed with key stakeholders and feedback was incorporated into the final draft. The last phase of the program lasted approximately one week.

1.2.3   Constraints to the Evaluation

This evaluation was constrained by multiple challenges, including a tense and uncertain political situation, the ongoing COVID-19 global pandemic, Ramadan, a long period of inactivity between the last program activities and the evaluation and significant turnover within the implementing agencies.   Despite this fact, the consultant conducted over 100 hours of interviews with the stakeholders that agreed to participate and as a result has been able to formulate an opinion regarding the project and its implementation.
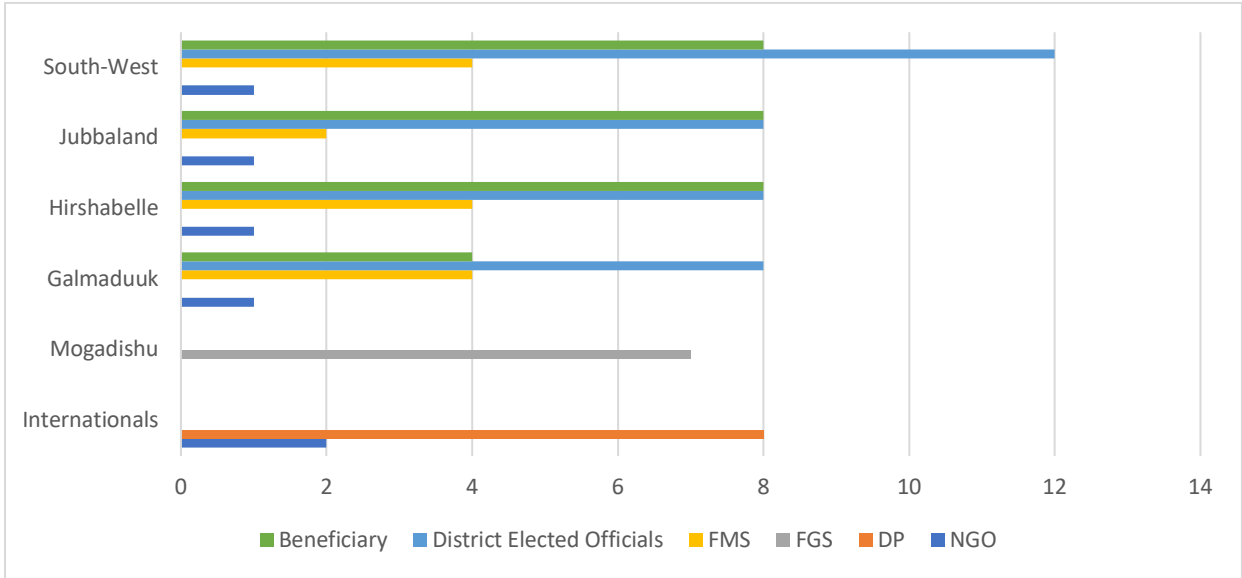
Figure 3: Interviewee Repartition by levels of Government and Institution

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[14] The evaluator started carrying out interviews in late April and concluded them in mid-July. During that time progress was not uniform, there were periods of intense activity followed by periods where activity was limited.
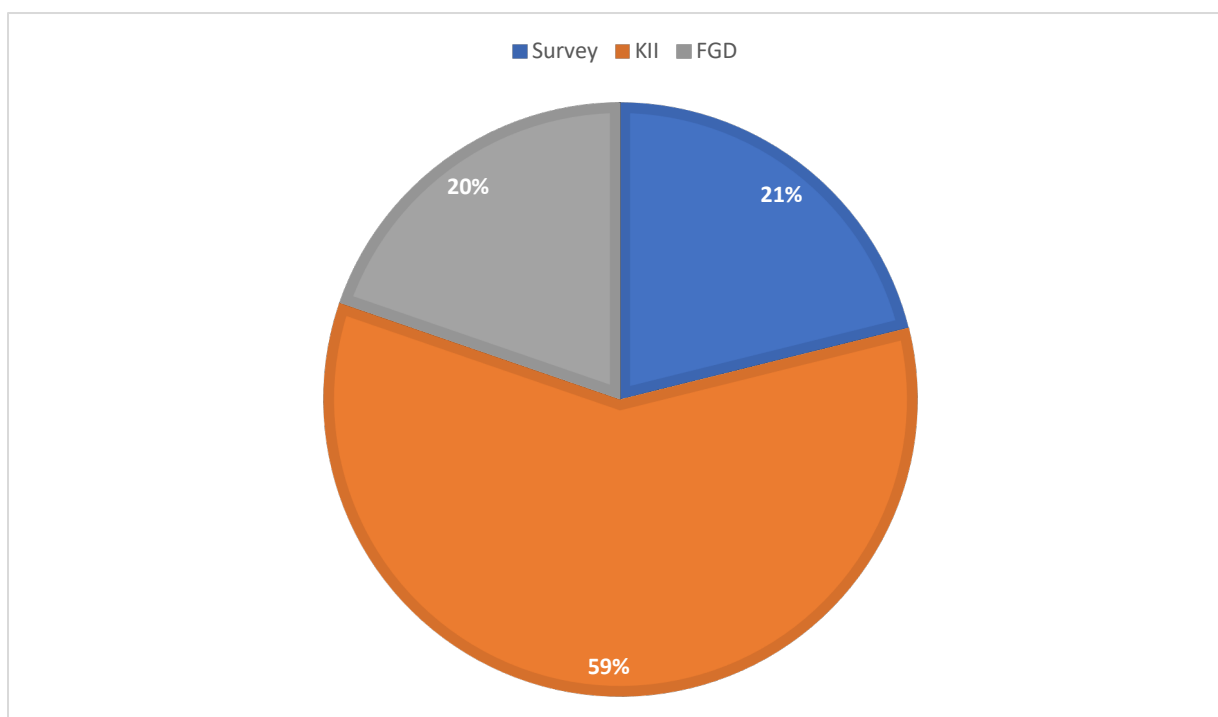
Figure 4: Summary of Data Collection Methods

The constraints that the consultant faced, and their impact are worth noting at the outset, since they can provide some insight as to how to conduct the program and the subsequent evaluation in complex environments. Table 1 below highlights them.

*Table **2**: Constraints faced by the consultant in carrying out his assignment.*

Challenge	Impact
COVID-19 global pandemic has rendered international travel impossible.	The consultant was unable to travel to Somalia. Most of the interviews were conducted via teleconference. Covid also affected implementation of the program so that not only were field activities limited but additionally they occurred in the early part of 2020, so that many of those involved in those activities had either left the program, the district or had moved on to other activities rendering them unavailable to the evaluator.
Turnover within the Ministry of Interior and UNDP	A large portion of the staff in the Ministry of Interior responsible for the program changed in the latter part of project implementation, accordingly a lot of the institutional memory from the project was lost. Apparently, the program was not well integrated with the rest of the ministry and worked as an isolated silo, accordingly, others within the ministry were not privy to the activities of the program. Some of MOIFAR's staff declined the invitation to be interviewed.

	Similarly, UNDP changed several key staff that was privy to both programming and implementation rationale and decisions including the country director, the program manager, the project manager, and some project staff.
Completion of the project	While the program was extended, the activities of the program ended several months prior to the evaluation. The time lag limited the incentive on the part of employees to constructively engage in the evaluation. Additionally, it appears that the end of the project came across as abrupt and several staff at the local level indicated resentment with the project, resulting in an unwillingness to cooperate.
Uncertain political situation nationally and within federal member states	Tense relationships between FMS and FGS complicated the work of the project and its members. While generally constructive, it is clear nonetheless that some resentment between MOIFAR and MOI of FMS affected the relationship and tainted the assessment that the stakeholders provided regarding the program and its functioning.
Ramadan	The Holy month of Ramadan restricted the hours in which the consultant had access to staff.
Quality of Connectivity varies across the territory and is particularly poor in remote areas.	The quality and reliability of communication platforms was limited to virtual video and audio conferencing, through Zoom. A large amount of time was spent trying to obtain and maintain suitable communication. In certain instances, stakeholders were not familiar with virtual video and audio conferencing worked and preferred other means of communications which were less reliable and did not allow the consultant to capture the information and record it.
Limited knowledge of English, especially on the part of beneficiaries	Communication in English was an issue. The consultant was able to hire a translator and carried out the interviews. But some important background was probably lost in translation.

1.2.4 Content of the Final Evaluation

In chapter 1 we provided a background and context to the activity, described the methodology and highlighted the challenges confronted by the evaluator. Consistently with the terms of reference, this evaluation is divided into four key chapters:

- In chapter 2, the evaluator will review the **relevance** of the program
- In chapter 3 we will review project effectiveness
- In chapter 4 the evaluator will carry out an assessment of the efficiency of the project
- In chapter 5 the evaluator will focus on sustainability and ownership
- In chapter 6, he will discuss sustainability and impact.
- In chapter 7, he will draw conclusions from the evaluation and make recommendations.

CHAPTER 2: RELEVANCE

Consistently with OECD DAC guidelines, in assessing relevance, the evaluation estimated the extent to which the intervention objectives and design responded to beneficiaries' country, and partner/institution needs, policies, and priorities, and continue to do so. Overall, this evaluation finds that the operation was and remains **relevant to the Somali environment**, the situation of districts and the circumstances of different stakeholders. In addressing the question of relevance, the evaluator responded to the questions posed in the Terms of Reference and highlighted in table two below

Table 3: Review Questions regarding Relevance

R1	To what extent was the project in line with the national development priorities- such as the National Development Plan (NDP), the Wadajir Framework, Stabilization Strategy, the UN Strategic Plan, and the Sustainable Development Goals?
R2	To what extent has the project been appropriately responsive to the political, social, security, institutional capacity, etc. changes in the country?
R3	Was the project relevant in addressing conflict drivers and factors for peace identified in a conflict analysis?
R4	Was the project appropriate and strategic to the main peacebuilding goals and challenges in the country at the time of the PBF project's design? Did relevance continue throughout implementation?
R5	To what extent did the project achieve its overall objectives? Did the project provide the necessary support to the target government institutions as outlined in the project document?
R6	To what extent did the project contribute to gender equality, the empowerment of women and the human rights-based approach? Specifically, the evaluation will measure if the gender marker of the project was in line with the achieved results.
R7	What and how much progress has been made towards achieving the overall outputs and outcomes of the project, including contributing factors and constraints?
R8	Were the inputs and strategies identified appropriate and adequate to achieve the results? Were they realistic? Was the project relevant in terms of addressing identified needs?

Each question is reviewed in more detail below.

R1: Overall, the project was in line with the national development priorities

The evaluator notes that in preparing the project, great care was placed to aligning the project with national development priorities as highlighted by key strategic frameworks, such as:

- The National Development Plan 2017-2019
- The National Stabilization Strategy
- The New Partnership for Somalia and

- The Security Pact and Transition plan.

Specifically**:**

- **The National Development Plan (2017-2019) focused on reconciliation and the establishment of the federal government machinery** as essential to establishing a peaceful and stable country capable of providing livelihoods for its citizens. In this context the emphasis of the establishment of legitimate local governments fits squarely onto the approach of the Development Plan.

- The updated **National Stabilization Strategy emphasized building more coherent sets of interventions in the context and evolving challenges in the country and** underscored the importance of increasing capacity of key Somali institutions to lead coordination efforts, develop and implement policies and interventions in a coherent, sequenced, and sustainable manner. While this was reflected in the project design, the result was in fact not achieved in terms of implementation. The coordination of the intervention both within MOIFAR and among development partners was difficult and represented an element of dysfunction in a very complex implementation environment.

- The New Partnership for Somalia reflected the agreement by the Somali Government and the international community to work collaboratively. **The new partnership recognized that reconciliation and the establishment of a complete government system (Federal, Federal Member State and District) were essential for sustained peace, stabilization, and development advocated the Use of Country Systems (UCS).** The S2SII project design and implementation reflected these principles. Noteworthy is that the project funds through the national systems and should be recognized as a pioneer project in this respect in Somalia.

- **The Security Pact and Transition Plan explicitly drew a link between security and political agreement, state building, and stabilization by recognizing that delivering effective security is also about enabling a dialogue** on the causes of insecurity and establishing governance forums and frameworks for negotiation between factions on appropriate and collaborative mechanisms to restore public safety and order. This is piece and parcel of what the project attempted to do.

Accordingly, the project successfully and effectively aligns with the national development priorities and effectively contributes to providing guidance and clarity in the process of institutional development regarding the objectives and priorities in developing local governance in Somalia.

R2: Despite this thematic alignment, the project was not sufficiently responsive to the political, social and security, institutional capacity, etc. changes in the country.?

The thematic alignment of the project identifies several themes and issues that entail significant amount of work and support. Neither MOIFAR at the federal level, nor Federal Member States' Ministries of Interior had sufficient capacity to manage such a large agenda. MOIFAR is responsible of a very wide spectrum of tasks. The development of local administration and reconciliation were elements that required a significant amount of work strategically, to develop laws, policies and processes which would allow their involvement across the territory, while Federal Member States were still embryonic, with very limited administrative, policy and financial capacity.

While the project was developed in a period of relative optimism regarding the political, social, security and institutional capacity in the country, it is still important to recognize that the scope of the project may have been too broad, and the financial resources allocated to it were too small. This would have required a readjustment of the project's objectives and scope sometime during the implementation to reflect the lack of progress in the constitutional process and the subsequent difficulties in defining an appropriate model of federalism which would enable suitable resources to be allocated where needed. This did not occur.

R3: The project was relevant in suitably addressing conflict drivers and factors for peace at the district level through conflict analysis, but the findings were not often used to tailor project intervention during implementation.

The evaluator was able to review some of the conflict analysis reports which were developed for some of the districts. These are interesting and represent important achievements in terms of good practice, since they document the situation and provide information about the nature of conflict in each district. The evaluator notes that in many instances the recommendations made by these reports were not included in the definition of the program of assistance to specific districts. Moreover, the evaluator notes that these reports should be considered living documents which ought to be updated and maintained current and should inform the implementation of the program. While the evaluator recognizes that political economy analysis is a sensitive topic that is difficult to discuss, what is relevant is how potential issues affect the decision-making of local governments about allocation of resources and how to ensure that each investment's utility in terms of achieving harmony and peace is maximized.

The evaluator also notes that elements, in terms of program infrastructure, enable the update by project of these program documents, as liaison officers and other project staff can provide useful information to maintain these documents current and to tailor implementation and could form the base for an institutional imprint into the different districts, but MOIFAR does not seem to use this infrastructure[15]. This information, in turn can be used to better tailor the type and intensity of the intervention in each sector. Yet,

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[15] The evaluator received an email on the part of a liaison officer asking him as to the project and whether it was continuing as he stopped receiving a salary in early 2021, but not official communication regarding his status.

Instead, while these resources were used to lay out the initial intervention framework, they do not appear to have been used effectively once implementation of the project started to tailor program interventions in environments where reconciliation and district council formation proved more difficult. They do not appear to have been updated during implementation to reflect the most up to date knowledge and understanding of the situation. This is regrettable since information by districts is limited and this analysis could represent a foundational element in the creation of an exploitable district knowledgebase. For example, the analysis could potentially have been updated to reflect the actual location of public service delivery centers, pinpointing areas that are underserved, and the needs and requirements of specific groups such as women, youth or IDP – essentially information that could have come out from the process of reconciliation and to build the knowledge base at the district council formation which could then be used to jump-start the interventions focused on service delivery. This, in the opinion of the evaluator is a missed opportunity.

R4: To remain relevant throughout implementation, the project should have had more agility to evolve and adjust as local circumstances evolved.

Based on the above analysis, we conclude that while project was appropriate and strategic to the main peacebuilding goals and challenges in the country at the time of the PBF project's design, it failed to adapt and adjust as needed. Since situation on the ground is fast moving, the project should be able to quickly adapt, within the conceptual framework of the project, to changing circumstances.

The complexity of this project is that each district has very specific characteristics that require, within the framework of the project, the ability to modulate and prioritize the interventions. This did not always occur and accordingly it reduced the ability of the project to respond to the local challenges that emerged in the process of reconciliation and district council formation.

This inability to adapt promptly and effectively is not surprising given the lack of capacity both at MOIFAR and at the Federal Member States and the fact that governance arrangements were cumbersome. Moreover, changes in personnel both at the level of the project, MOIFAR, and UNDP effectively reduced the capacity of the project to initiate and effectively carry on this readjustment.

What is relevant here is that for future programs, extensive attention should be placed on ensuring that there is awareness, flexibility, and capacity for the project– within well-defined boundaries – to adapt its intervention model to remain pertinent throughout the implementation. This presupposes a much more agile governance framework than the one developed for this project and an expectation that staff deployed on the ground provide the information required, on a timely basis to make programmatic decisions.

R5: The project did not achieve its overall objectives and government institutions received insufficient support to effectively carry out their functions.

The evaluation, once again, wishes to highlight the difficult circumstances that this project faced during implementation. The protracted length of the COVID pandemic was certainly detrimental to this project. Both Federal and FMS staff were even more limited in their movement than usual. Accordingly, it could not maintain the necessary contact with district staff that was expected and required. The program was in fact extended by seven months, but these months regrettably only sparked very limited activity.

Interviews reveal that during implementation central oversight was limited over long periods of time and that communication between level of governments and development partners during this period was also limited. The insufficient implementation oversight carried out is one of the main reasons for the fact that in the second phase the implementation success was much more limited than in the first phase.

Moreover, the project document reveal that the expectation was that this project would have a catalytic effect and would be able to draw additional financial support from other donors. The amounts allocated by the project were expected to be seed money, complemented by government funds as well as other development partners. These additional funds did not materialize; accordingly, district level governments did not receive the necessary support to carry out their functions.

R6: The project attempted to address gender equality, the empowerment of women and the human rights-based approach.

The project very directly addressed gender equality and the political empowerment of women, making this a central element of the project. It focused on trying to raise awareness about the potential benefits of women participation in the political process. The arguments used included specifically how women had proven to be problem solvers in their communities and secondly that women have the capacity to perform better in preserving the interests of their communities, including the children. The approach used was one where the Gender specialist from the project who went to speak with community elders and members of the community to start raising awareness and to continue this process in the context of the work done during District Council Formation. Awareness workshops were also carried out by the project, as well as other projects and NGOs. Irrespective of who financed the workshops, the feedback is that awareness raising activities were well received and they met their intended objective. Overall, women interviewed found the awareness raising interesting and worthwhile.

 Limitations to their participation were perceptions about their level of education – which across the board is a key element to obtain respect among the group. It may be worthwhile to identify ways in which participation in the awareness raising process bestows these women a formal title of recognition that could raise their status within their community – a sort of "diploma "which they can subsequently use as distinction worthy of consideration.

Common themes emerging from conversations are described in Figure, they include:

- the fact that they were made aware of their rights as individuals and equals to men
- The pride that they feel to represent their community and how they are considered an example for other women and men
- The importance of formal education
- The pivotal roles that women that are involved in politics in meetings, mainly as mediators of conflict

Figure 5: Gender -Visualization of Key Themes

The feedback that was received is that more than having workshops specifically for women, they find that workshops which include women but deal with administration and policy issues of relevance to the districts are effective tools to open minds and encourage change.

> *"More inclusive workshops, not male or female, but both, can change the perception of both traditional leaders, men but also women… Elders now say that women add a lot, and when the women see us working, the entire community of women see that they can participate."*

Moreover, through the evaluation one notes that there is a profile of women who are willing to partake in the political process. They tend to have had a supportive environment at home growing up and were socially active in their communities and must be willing to campaign and solicit endorsements.

> *"My father sent me to school, and I am studying to become a social worker. He always told me before he died that when you become an educated person, you will face a lot of challenges, especially from men. They'll try to push you aside, so you have to be a strong person" …. No-one can stop me from becoming a person, a voice of my community. I was born here, I used to be a voice before I joined this political process, I was talking about problems of education, of health, I was showing the first people from NGOs that came where the hospitals were, and how they worked." – Women Focus Group Participant*

Work was also carried out with respect to Internally Displaced people, and – to a much lesser extent to people with disabilities. These activities had much less impact and effect.

As with most findings, the impact and effectiveness of these activities varied, depending on the community, and their view on social issues (such as gender equality), the strength of clan control, the intensity of the rivalry for resources and the trust on the government and in this case its intermediaries – project staff. The variance is significant. The district council in Dinsoor includes ten out of twenty-one women, meanwhile, the district council in Hudur has none. This highlights the fact that certain communities will need to be approached differently than others to achieve social outcomes such as gender inclusion.

The program focused on achieving some formal targets, such as 30% inclusion in district council. International experience seems to indicate that while this process takes time, once women are on the council, they tend to become more assertive in addressing issues of relevance to their lives, as opposed to reflecting the views of the community to which they belong.

Given what is highlighted above, the evaluator finds that the project meets the gender marker 2 identified in at the time the project was prepared.

R7: The Project was only partially effective in achieving project outcomes and outputs

Table 2 below provides a brief synopsis of the evaluation's assessment regarding project outcomes and objectives. Overall, the evaluator finds that the outcomes and outputs of the project were only partially achieved. While this is not an insignificant achievement given the difficult circumstances in which the project was implemented, it is important to note that the main flaw of the project is its lack of agility in reexamining – within the framework of the project – its engagement modalities and recalibrate its action, depending on the challenges and difficulties it encountered.

Table 4: Project Results

	Description	Evaluation	Justification
Outcome 1:	Outcome Indicator 1.1: Federal, state and district-level administrations have capacity to oversee, coordinate and implement stabilization activities	Partially Achieved: 71% of third party monitoring achieved. Strictly fiduciary assessments	Oversight function was carried out: Third party monitoring was conducted in 10 out of 14 districts. 17+ field visits, 4 executive visits on the part of Project staff, FGS and FMS. However, reporting frequency quality were a concern. Human Capacity in MOIFAR and MOIs of FMS. needs to be addressed. The indicator chosen to evaluate this outcome lacks precision.
	Outcome Indicator 1.2 Value (in $) of resources channeled through the national window. Baseline: 1,435,615 Target: 4,000,000	Partially Achieved. Met indicator target, but KII provide qualitative information which tempers the assessment.	100% of funds were disbursed via national window. Three layered cash transfer from FGS treasury account through the MOF of FMS to respective districts. 2 FMS (Jubbaland and SWS have established Treasury Single Accounts to transfer funds to District level. Procedures have cut paperwork in half. However, Project was not able to catalyze sufficient additional resources
Output 1.1 Empowering local governments leads to higher levels of legitimacy.	Indicator 1.1.1: # of staff at district, FMS and federal level recruited and in place to support Stabilization activities	Partially Achieved 58% of target	Target was 34 staff (6 for FGS), 10 for FMS and 18 for district. Achievement: 20 staff are operational at district and federal level: 14 (M13, F:1), 1 per district. 6 staff (F:2; M:4) at MOIFAR. District level staff is indicated as FMS staff. Some Staff was trained but departed as a result capacity was not necessarily improved either at FGS, States and District Levels. Reports were produced, but target was not met.
	Indicator 1.1.2: Government effectively managed stabilization activities at three levels of government.	Partially Achieved	Target was 18 district reports per month. Reporting by Project is unclear regarding this target, however extrapolation from information provided below would indicate that district level staff submitted on average 7 reports each. 96% district level staff submitted reports (95 out of 98) 91% of staff received satisfactory rating

			100% FGS level reports received. The evaluator reviewed reports and found them lacking key information required for the management of stabilization activities. The issue is not the quantity of reports but the quality.
Output 1.2 **Financial support enables local governments to operate**	Indicator 1.2.1: Value (in $) of resources expensed by district administration	Achieved	Target was placed at $100,000 total achieved appears to be 210,000. The makeup of such expenditures appears to be 63% to the districts, and 18 percent to FMS and FGS. Financial support was provided to local governments. Funds were used to meet operating and running costs. This funding does not provide the financial support to provide services to the citizen, just to establish a physical presence. Maintaining low the levels of transfers using national window in order to establish the effectiveness of the system is a wise programmatic decision.
	Indicator 1.2.2: Number of fiduciary **monitoring visits with reports and recommendations for improvement adopted and implemented.**	Partially Achieved	Baseline 10 – Target is not well specified Achieved: 11 monitoring visits to districts and FGS with reports and recommendations seminars conducted in Kismayo, Baidoa Bled Weyn. Abudwak, Warsheikh, Bula-Burde , Hudur, Hobyo and Barawe.
	Indicator 1.2.3: # of financial procedures adopted and implemented	Undetermined	No information provided on this indicator in progress reports or other information made available to evaluator. .
Outcome 2: An enabling environment conducive to social cohesion, trust, civic participation, and development led by the community is established in accessible districts	Outcome Indcator 2: Social cohesion improved, and trust increased	Undetermined	Baseline indicator: fair and target excellent. This indicator is difficult to ascertain. District peace and stability committees were created to serve as framework for reconciliation in 9 districts.
Output 2.1 Coordination mechanisms strengtehend to attract new partners and align actions	Output Indicator 2.1.1: # of stakeholders participating in every two months coordination meetings organized at FGS level	Achieved	Baseline 23 – Target 26 Participation averaged 28 people per meeting. Note that M&E Framework identified third party monitoring agency performance reports as an element to document findings. It does not appear that Third party monitoring included agency performance as an element of its review.

	Output Indicator 2.1.2. # of state stabilization coordination meetings organized at FMS level	Achieved	Target was 4 national stabilization meetings Achieved 8 stabilization meetings with 228 participation attending. Coordination mechanism established to implement social cohesion and reconciliation interventions.
Output 2.2: Reconcilation	Output Indicator 2.2.1 # of gender fair DPSC established with approved TOR	Achieved	Target was 8 and achievement was 9: Abudwak, Garbaharay, Bardere, Baladweyn, Jowhar, Hudur, Bardale, Barawe and Bidoa.
	Output Indicator 2.2.2: # of coordination meetings between DPSC and peace dividend providers	Undertermined	Information provided to the evaluator does not allow it to determine the achievement of this output
	Output Indicator 2.2.3 # of disputes resolved by DPSC	Achieved	Target was 10, 1 per district This is not a useful indicator, as not all disputes have the same relevance or impact.
	Output Indicator 2.2.4 and 2.2.5: # of district council consultations organized with community to form governance structures, legitimate district councils	Partially Achieved	Target was 6 from a baseline of 4. Achievement was 5 conferences in Dinsoor. This Level of Effort nonetheless is insufficient to achieve desired outcomes.
	Output Indicator 2.2.6: # of people participating in district council formation process	Not Achieved	Target was 30% and the achievement was 18%. There was however considerable variance between districts, with the highest level of women participation n Dinsoor (47%)
	Output Indicator 2.2.7	Not achieved	Target was 4 project meetings and two were conducted.
	Output 2.3 Project Effectively Managed List of some of the activities under thisOutput 2.3.1 HR/Personnel 2.3.2 Project Travelcost 2.3.3 Supplies andEquipment 2.3.4 UNDP Office/premise's cost 2.3.5 Fiduciary Monitoring Agent onthe Government executed funds. 2.3.6 DPC 13% of theUNDP programmablefunds (includes security, financial management,	Partially Achieved	While some milestones have been achieved, the project lacked appropriate technical support and supervision from MOIFAR, MOI and UNDP. Program Board meetings do not provide sufficient information to evaluate further beyond this qualitative assessment.

In assessing the quality at entry, the evaluation focused on several key elements. First, examining the theory of change, second evaluating the logical framework, third, the risk assessment and the mitigation measures, and fourth the implementation arrangements.

R8: Although the strategies identified were generally appropriate and adequate to achieve the results, the project would have benefited from more realism.

The project is designed following good practices and recent international experience. Accordingly, the strategies associated can be considered adequate, even if the focus of such activities could be potentially reframed. Nonetheless, it based its theory of change on hypothesis which over time did not come to bear. Figure 2 gives a graphic description of the project rationale, which focuses on the reestablishment of the presence, capacity, and legitimacy of government institutions as the key element to the recreation of a social contract which can sustain peace and stability.

While the presence of the state is largely the result of a military intervention, the capacity of government institutions requires the development of formal GoS institutions in each area and is a governance question. Endowing these governments with legitimacy requires the acceptance on the part of all members of the community of the institutions in question and their ability to make decisions on the part of the collectivity, this needs to address elements that are affecting the quality of the relationship between different communities and addresses the underlying sources of tension.

Strengthening presence, capacity and legitimacy of government institutions . ...

Leads to delivery of tangible peace dividends... (absence of conflict and public services)... which in turn

Establishes GoSas the only source of security and public services, with the local government as key interface

This reorganization of the relationship cements the creation or recreation of social contracts that can sustain peace and stability.
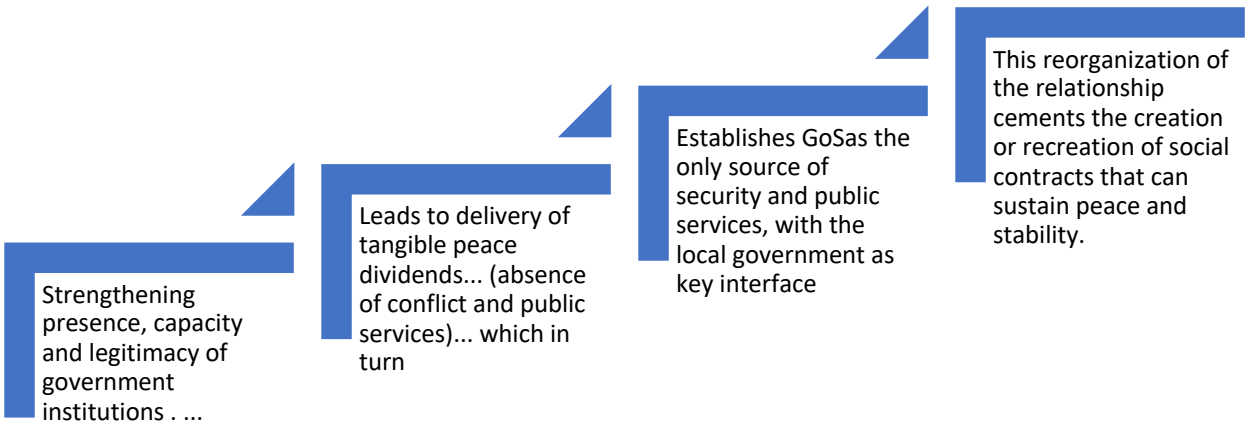
Figure 6: Project Rationale

The Assumptions underlying the theory of change require more scrutiny

The assumptions that are motivating the program include:

➢   the government is the most appropriate and acceptable actor to lead reconciliation efforts.

➢   through the community reconciliation efforts, intra and inter-community tensions and conflict can be addressed to allow communities to find commonly agreed solutions through a process of negotiation.

➢   The project builds upon the notion that developing capacities of the public sector will indeed lead to improved performance of the Government and therefore extend its credibility and legitimacy, whilst simultaneously replacing the coercive governance models of malign actors.

➢   Stabilization requires the whole of government approach that allows other stakeholders to align their work, the assumptions are that most actors are indeed willing to do so and that the impact of non-aligned work will be insufficient to derail overall progress.

While these assumptions are apparently legitimate, there are several elements can be challenged:

While reconciliation is recognized as a powerful means by which to help societies heal after brutal wars and mass atrocities, experience suggests that modern-day conflicts are often related to polarization, inequality, and mistrust of institutions[16].

This means that government is only an appropriate forum to lead reconciliation if it is recognized as trustworthy. This sets up a chicken and egg argument, namely: should governments lead reconciliation? Or is successful reconciliation leading to the creation of an inclusive government? This dichotomy is not merely dialectic, and in the context of this project creates ambiguity regarding the focus and the sequencing of activities. If the former proposition is correct, as is stated in the initial hypothesis, then indeed the focus should be primarily on the creation of governance structures.

However, if the latter proposition is correct, then focus should be placed on activities which address mistrust to determine when the time has come to focus on the development of representative government institutions. Namely, in a way that when communities "graduate" from stabilization, they move to institutions building. In retrospect, the experience from the project would seem to indicate that the hypothesis could be revisited.

The project, in fact operates by addressing both versions at once. On the one hand, it places on government the bulk of the responsibility to lead reconciliation all the while seeking to address its

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16 This element is reflected in findings of the first meetings on issues of reconciliation held by the security council of the United Nations in November 2019.

credibility gap. This approach could work if it were determined that the circumstances vary in each district and that therefore, the project would need to take a different approach in each. This could have some merit, provided evidentiary basis was provided to recommend one engagement approach as opposed to another. From the documentation that was made available to the evaluator, there is no evidence that this discussion took place.

As will be discussed in the recommendation section, documentation of the approach, the intervention and the results should be considered a key output of these types of programs.

Experience in Somalia and worldwide, seems to indicate that legitimacy is in fact acquired if the institutions that are developed are viewed as inclusive and equitable, first. Political representation matters but it's secondary.

While the project appropriately indicates that the development public sector capacities will contribute to improved performance of the Government and therefore be responsible to some degree to extending its credibility and legitimacy it is unclear that this result can be achieved within the timeframe of a single project. In the districts in which the project was not successful in fostering an improved environment for peace and reconciliation and did not lay the foundation for sustainable peace, interviewees highlighted the fact that the services provided by the state (especially in the administration of justice) did not enjoy the support of the population because they were slow and could not be enforced. This means that in fact, in those districts, poor delivery of service undermined faith in the institutions and hindered the resolution of grievances between communities.

While appointed institutions must provide basic services[17] to prove themselves, in hindsight, one could argue that this is something that the project should focus very deliberately while it is seeking to develop a framework for inclusive and representative governance. In the context of this specific project, the evaluator would argue that the development of public sector capacity should be the focus of a JPLG-like project, more than a S2SII program.

Stakeholder Alignment requires capacity to coordinate, monitor and enforce

While coordination is a difficult endeavor among development partners, who enjoy significant human and financial capacity, this is much harder for institutions in the Government of Somalia. This project attempted to address this issue but attempting to develop capacity within the Ministries of Interior and districts, while entrusting them to carry out the responsibility for coordination, monitoring and enforcement of the activities of the project. In retrospect recognition must be given that while all efforts should be made to use country systems, until there is a clear definition of roles and responsibilities, the facilitation of coordination is probably one element in which development partners need and can successfully assist our counterparts.

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[17] In particular ensuring peace and providing equal justice.

CHAPTER 3: EFFECTIVENESS

In assessing effectiveness, the evaluation focused on the extent to which the achieved its objectives and whether the intervention has attained its planned results, the process by which this was done, which factors were decisive in this process and whether there were any unintended effects. In assessing effectiveness, in addition to the answers provided in chapter 2, the evaluation will respond to several evaluation questions listed in Table 3 below:

E1	To what extent did the project contribute to the country program document outputs and outcomes, UN Strategic Framework, the SDGs, and the national development priorities?
E2	Describe the management processes and their appropriateness in supporting delivery
E3	How did the project funding level and resource mobilization affect project? implementation?
E4	To what extent did the project's M&E mechanism contribute to meeting project results?
E5	How effective has the project been in responding to the needs of the beneficiaries, and what results were achieved?
E6	What are the lessons learned for future intervention strategies and issues?

E1: Despite its strategic alignment, the difficult implementation process meant that the project contribution to country program document outputs and outcomes, UN Strategic Framework, the SDGs, and national development priorities should, thus far, be considered limited.

As mentioned in the previous section, the project was strategically well aligned with all programmatic document, whether from the Government of Somalia or the Development partners. However, the project has only had very limited impact on the ground, due to the extremely difficult circumstances in which the project was implemented. It is hard to overstate how COVID and the changes in management staff at MOIFAR impacted the project.

With respect to COVID, for months at a time, while the country and the world were being attacked by different waves of the virus, staff's movement and access to documentation was limited. While there is evidence that in 2020, for example the project managed to be active, this activity was limited and sporadic, focused mainly on three major outings: April, end May and September/October. The interaction was limited to less than a week and a single district at a time and the oversight was also limited.

With respect to changes in management, capable staff was onboarded, but it lacked the benefit from institutional memory which was developed during the preceding period. Moreover, current staff mentioned that they were not given any training but were asked to step in and contribute.

E2: At the operational level-management processes should be revisited to ensure appropriate support to the activities financed by the project.

The project worked directly with the Federal Government of Somalia, Federal Member States and districts, through their ministries of Interior.

Intra and Inter-agency coordination should be revisited

The lead counterpart was MOIFAR at the federal level. At the time of project preparation, the interaction between the federal and the state level authorities was generally positive, and this trend was expected to continue. In effect that was not the case, and in several instances, despite generally good working relationships between staff from the different ministries of interiors, political disagreements interrupted some of the cooperation. The division of labor between Federal and Member-state level authorities was defined with the federal level taking on the administrative and coordination lead, and the federal member states responsible for the implementation of the activities. Responsibilities were also well defined in terms of fiduciary reporting with each level having responsibilities relating to the funds that they received.

International development partners also had segmented responsibilities. UNDP had a mainly administrative role in managing fund transfers through various management instruments. UNSOM CRESTA/A provided coordinating and advisory support to the project because of its ongoing engagement in the stabilization process[18]. Public relation, awareness, sensitization materials and activities were outsourced and procured through the services of local NGOs, community-based organizations, and contractors

The overall management and coordination of the project was overseen by the Project Board, that comprised representatives from MoIFAR, MoF, UNDP and UNSOM who was responsible for reviewing progress towards the targets set forth in the project document, including reviewing the activities identified in the monitoring and evaluation framework and the third-party monitoring reports, and on the basis identifying solutions and adjustments to maximize the impact of the project and mitigate against any risks identified. The Board, appears to have met at least once, to request the extension of the project for an additional seven months in April 2020, there is no evidence that the board met beyond that. This level of frequency is not adequate for a project which requires the ability to be flexible to adapt to rapidly changing circumstances.

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[18] This modality was developed under the first phase of the project and functioned well and as a result continued to have a role delivering technical advice.

Within MOIFAR, the program was run by a specific project unit, and according to staff interviewed the coordination with other departments and agencies within MOIFAR was limited. While the management of the project did not necessarily affect the delivery of activities, it certainly did affect the continuity of the support that was provided to the districts. In fact, there were long lags sometimes between the creation of district councils and the beginning of the development of the institutional development phase of the program under the purview of programs such as JPLG.

This is a complex support infrastructure, which in the opinion of the evaluator in the second phase of the program inhibited the ability of the project to adjust the sequencing and nature of the activities it supported depending on the circumstances in the district.

It is also unclear to the evaluator the reason why UNDP's role was so limited, given its role in institutional building in Somalia. UNDP has had extensive experience in post-conflict countries and much of the staff associated with UNDP projects had significant relevant experience from their previous engagements which could have benefited both the Somali government. Additionally, the close interaction of Support to Stabilization II and JPLG would have seemed natural, yet it was not the case. Limiting UNDP to mere administrative function and giving advisory responsibility to CRESTA/A, without supervisory functions in fact limited the integration of S2S into the longer-term programming of UNDP, while limiting oversight capacity of development partners of the project. Additionally, there appears to be confusion regarding the extent to which CRESTA/A was expected to provide support to the project and the extent to which they were supposed to be involved. In the project document CRESTA was assigned an advisory and technical assistance support function, which it carried out consistently with its perceived mandate and capacity. However, CRESTA/A is not endowed with staff and therefore could not have provided the level of support that an embryonic institutional development project would have required or that would compensate for UNDP's support.

As a result, it appears that the support that CRESTA/A provided to the Ministry was not as extensive as a pilot institutional development project would have required, and not focused enough on institutional development process[19] as it should have for this project to be effective, since institutional development was more within the purview of UNDP. It appears that the team that effectively prepared the project left Somalia and those who took over did not fully understand what their role was meant to be, as this had neither been clearly defined nor effectively documented. This left a vacuum, at minimum, in providing hands-on technical assistance support focused on the process of institutional development.

The evaluator understands that while there were formal meetings and exchanges between stakeholders, the interaction did not go as far as one would expect. Within the UN family itself, "silo-ization" contributed to perhaps limit the continuity of the activity between one project and the other. Most notable of this lack of interaction is the process of "handing over" or "graduating" a district from S2SII to JPLG. On the one hand, at the very least, S2SII generated conflict analysis and other documents to support S2S that could be relevant to JPLG as it plans its engagement,

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[19] As opposed to peace and stability support.

on the other hand, increased coordination between S2S and JPLG could have created economies of scale.

The project document recognized the challenge and risk associated with project management and indicated that this would be an element in which oversight would be enhanced. The evaluator found no evidence that the complex governance structure that was developed improved management coordination and oversight under the second project.

The National Window experiment was generally positive in terms of transferring money, but requires more mentoring and technical assistance from development partners, not less.

As mentioned previously S2S was the first project is considered a pioneer in the use of the National Window. Third party monitoring reveals that generally the experiment worked well. Because the amounts were limited, the fiduciary exposure was limited[20]. The complaints received by the evaluator by both the districts and the federal authorities are usual. Namely, the districts complained that the funds arrived with some delay, and this affected their already limited operation. Meanwhile, Ministry of Finance complained that the requests for payment were not well drafted, and it forced them to send them back or to amendment. MOF indicated that delays were not significant (3 weeks at maximum), while districts complained of delays lasting months (as many as four). Third party monitoring indicated only one systemic flaw, which is that approved fund transfer request to UNDP, should clearly note the National Budget line(s) against which this support is being directed, which is not what was noted in the fund sent to UNDP. MoIFAR uses the national budget lines in the financial reports and the data maintained in SFMIS (Somali Financial Management Information System). MOIFAR indicates this is a UNDP problem, not MOIFARs problem. This back and forth is an example of how a deeper more systematic involvement of the UNDP team could have benefited the program[21].

I. Fund requests are done through a formal request letter from the Ministry of Interior, Federal Affairs and Reconciliations (MoIFAR) and sent to UN MPTF office and a copy given to UNDP and RCO.

II. Funds from UNDP are sent directly to a single treasury account and the Accountant General deposits the funds in a dedicated bank account held in Central bank of Somalia.

III. The Accountant General's office manages the project bank account.

IV. The MoIFAR prepares the Expenditure Warrant (F16) signed by the Minister of MoIFAR, Accountant General and Director of Budget and endorsed by Auditor General. The purpose of the Expenditure Warrant is to authorise the expenditure being incurred.

V. During Payment, MoIFAR prepares a Payment Voucher (F3) which is signed by the State Minister of MoIFAR, S2S Project Manager and then submitted to the Accountant General for approval then later submitted to Central bank of Somalia (CBS) for payment. Payment voucher (F3) shows the payee's name and bank account.

VI. Central Bank of Somalia deposits the funds directly to the payee's bank account held in commercial banks which is stated in the payment voucher (F3).

VII. The Expenditure Warrant (F16) and Payment Voucher (F3) prepared by MoIFAR states S2S Project expenditure budget lines included in the National Budget.

VIII. The S2S Project funds are accounted in the SFMIS (Somali Financial Management Information System) which is a centralized system used by FGS to account for all its funds for Ministries, Department and Agencies (MDA).

From Third Party Monitoring Report

Box 2: S2SII National Window Flow of Funds

[20] This approach is consistent with good international practices in terms of providing support through the use of national systems.

[21] Information gathered from third party monitoring report for FGS, completed in

E3: Resources Available to the Project were limited, and the project did not effectively catalyze funds from other donors.

The project supported many recipients: MOIFAR, the Ministries of Interior of Federal Member States and districts. This limited the amounts of resources available to each, with districts and federal member states indicating that the amounts received did not cover even running costs for basic functioning (water, electricity in the buildings). The project had anticipated being able to catalyze funds from different donors, thus providing more support to the districts. Regrettably did not take place. Interviewees identified donor fatigue, lack of progress in the federalism project.

E4: The project's M&E mechanism does not contribute to meeting Project Results

The project's Monitoring and Evaluation is meant to provide data to support the proposed Theory of Change. Evaluating whether a project is creating the conditions for peace and stability and whether the proposed activities contribute to the objective is a difficult endeavor. It is particularly difficult in an environment like Somalia, where information, when it exists is segmented. The project's Monitoring and Evaluation framework relies heavily on reports that are being developed because of project activities. This is a sensible approach. However, to be useful, these reports must provide meaningful information that can then be used to determine programming. This, for the most part is not the case.

Reports tend to be very descriptive without providing actionable information. This can be improved by providing the implementing agency with a significantly more structured template with which to provide information, and continued review and monitoring of the quality of such outputs. This means having a close relationship with the client, requesting additional information when needed and asking the implementor to work on developing action plans to follow-up on the issues raised by the report. For these projects to succeed, the information provided by the implementing agency must be clear, precise and substantive as opposed to descriptive.

Strengthening the capacity of the implementing agency to objectively report on activities it manages is a key element of capacity development and lays the foundation for a more transparent and accountable governance.

CHAPTER 4: EFFICIENCY

The evaluation assessed efficiency by determining whether resources could have been better allocated to achieve results. We focused primarily on operational efficiency and the work undertaken during implementation to ensure that results would be achieved. In addressing efficiency, to avoid repetition, the evaluation in addition to the responses and background provided in previous chapterS responded to the evaluation questions listed in the table below.

Table 5: Review Questions Guiding the assessment of efficiency

F1	To what extent have the project implementation strategy and execution been efficient and cost-effective?
F2	How efficient was the overall staffing, planning and coordination within the project and external partners?
F3	How efficiently did the project use the project board? How well did the project team communicate with implementing partners, stakeholders, and project beneficiaries on its progress?

F1: Efficiency of project implementation strategy and execution is limited

As mentioned, several times previously the project operated in an unprecedented situation which severely affected its implementation. The project financed staff to support MOIFAR and the FMS central administrations whose capacity to move around the territory was limited. As a result, they did not get the opportunity to perform to the extent expected from them. There was additionally turnover among staff, with new staff indicating that they had received little formal training on how to conduct the activities they were expected to perform.

The project, nonetheless, presents some interesting particularities. First, under normal circumstances, stabilization projects require hands-on assistance by respected individuals capable to provide advice. Consistently with good practice, the project employed Community Liaison Officers to fulfill this task. The evaluator interviewed a number of these individuals and was impressed with their quality and knowledge. The stakeholders interviewed by the evaluator indicated that these individuals were useful in bringing together the different parties in the forums that were developed to bring about council formation.

However, documentation regarding their activities that was provided to the evaluator is scarce and is missing important detailed information which would allow him to formulate an opinion regarding their effectiveness. Additionally, some of the people interviewed indicated that at some point in project implementation it was difficult to determine how many CLO had been actually deployed by MOIFAR and where they were deployed. Under the circumstances, and given the feedback, it is difficult to conclude that the project efficiently used its resources.

Nonetheless, the interaction that the evaluator had with CLO, reinforce his belief that Community Liaison Officers who perform well are resources that should not be lost and should be used by projects who operate sequentially in the same thematic space so as to maintain continuity and

lay the foundation for longer-term institutional development. This also presupposes that this staff is nurtured and can receive continued capacity and training, and that it is properly and transparently evaluated. The evaluator was shown is evidence that CLO carried out fundamental functions and roles in Dinsoor and Dhumusarreb, while there is much less information regarding the activities carried out by CLOs elsewhere and their effectiveness.

Moreover, in some instances, the use of IT communication tools was used with some success, but for the most part the long periods where staff was confined corresponded to periods of inactivity for the project.

F2: Staffing was carried out but capacity and ownership to the project of recruited staff varied greatly. Moreover coordination with internal and external partners can be improved to ensure that well-performing employees are retained.

The project employed staff in key positions. To support this statement, the evaluator notes that staff for 20 positions was recruited. Regrettably some have moved on and cannot be considered as resources for the project's Somali partners, while others are in place in locations where there is no momentum to achieve local council formation. There are opportunities for realignment and economies of scale with other projects, and this can occur if there is improved coordination.

There are concerns regarding the capacity and the role of these resources. For example, the understanding on the part of community liaison officers of their role varied greatly. Some indicated that their role was to facilitate the relationship between government administration and the citizen and to facilitate the activities associated to the formation of the district councils, while others reported that their role was to ensure that reporting matrix were filled out and information was provided to MOI for the purpose of the project.

Moreover, two factors are especially noteworthy. First the disparity in the capacity, enthusiasm, and commitment of CLO. Some, especially in better performing districts appear motivated and engaged in the state building process. Others, much less. While this observation does not purport to determine the causality, there seems to be a direct relationship with the level of capacity and engagement of CLO and the success of the district council formation process.

Secondly, is the uniformly impressive level of capacity of gender liaison officers and female council members. In some cases, their enthusiasm and motivation were a stark contrast to CLOs for example. Here too, irrespective of the success of the district council formation process, gender reps were motivated and conscious that the project was an opportunity for affirmation.

The staff that has demonstrated initiative, commitment to the project, enthusiasm even are a resource at the local level which must be nurtured and maintained. They are potentially the change agents that the project is seeking to develop. Yet, these resources right now are not being utilized and some of the investments that were made to train them and deploy them are being lost. Part of the design and implementation work that is being done should be to think about how to reasonably and judiciously ensure that this human capital continues to be used to facilitate stabilization, peace dialogue and institutions building.

Perhaps resources can be shared between projects (stabilization and then institutional building) in terms of development of trainings and capacity development modules, for example. Additionally, increased standardization in practices could facilitate the transition of staff between projects and reduce the time needed to address project requirements and to respond to the capacity requirements in the agencies in which they operate.

F3: The Project board should have been used to enhance project agility and better communication with other implementing partners could have improved coordination.

Communication is an area where the project could have improved. This is an observation that is valid across the board, but especially with respect with the Project Board and other implementing partners.

The project board brings together several development partners and was expected to provide strategic guidance for the project and by all accounts. Convening the board was a cumbersome experience and its input was limited, having met only once. Its input in this case was merely formalistic, approving a no cost extension for the project. A duly engage project board could have been instrumental to provide political support to the project as well as additional flexibility to address implementation challenges, especially as circumstances became more complicated. While financial resources are a clear constraint to operations in FCV affected countries, it is coordination and communication between development partners that is often wanting, since it further constrains the ability to proactively manage a changing environment. The project is a confirmation of this adage – While formal coordination between implementing partners occurred, a more engaged process and follow up would have generated significant value added.

CHAPTER 5. SUSTAINABILITY AND OWNERSHIP5. Sustainability and Ownership

The evaluation examined the financial, economic, social, and institutional capacities of the systems needed to sustain net benefits over time. In evaluating sustainability and ownership, the evaluation focused on the questions listed below, bearing in mind that sustainability has also been discussed in conjunction with other elements in the preceding sections.

Table 6: Review Questions for Sustainability and Ownership

SO1	Assess the extent to which the results are likely to continue with specific focus on national capacity and ownership over the process.
SO2	To what extent do stakeholders support the project's long-term objectives?
SO3	Did the intervention design include an appropriate sustainability and exit strategy? (Including promoting national/local ownership, use of national capacity etc.) to support positive changes in peacebuilding after the end of the project?
SO4	How strong is the commitment of the Government and other stakeholders to sustaining the results of PBF support and continuing initiatives, especially women's participation in decision making processes, supported under PBF Project?
SO5	How has the project enhanced and contributed to the development of national capacity to ensure suitability of efforts and benefits? To what extent are the benefits of the project likely to be sustained after the completion of this project?
SO6	What knowledge transfer took place during the project implementation that will guarantee government institutions will play their role when the project is closed?
SO7	Describe the main lessons that have emerged. What are the recommendations for similar support in the future? (The recommendations should provide comprehensive proposals for future interventions based on the current evaluation findings).

SO1   Sustainability depends upon the continuation of a long-term process

If the program is evaluated as an isolated, stand-alone project, it is impossible, given the circumstances, to view its limited achievements as sustainable. However, if it is seen as a steppingstone to continued support by a different instrument, the work the project has carried out in several districts has a moderate likelihood to be sustained.   District councils, however, will have to be supported so that they are seen as capable of delivering quality services to the population.

The process of stabilization and institutional development is a long-term endeavor. Its progression is not uniform and requires resources, time, and careful and continuous assessment of the situation on the ground. The merits of this project, both in the positive and the negative is that it's shown that a process that combines awareness raising, conflict resolution and lays the foundation to institutional development can lead to the creation of a formal representation arrangement. On the other hand, it's also shown that a boiler-plate approach does not work across the board.

Moreover, it is important to recognize that what happens prior to district council formation is as important, if not more, to institutional development as to what happens after. For this reason, it is important to ensure that stabilization and institutional development projects coordinate and monitor each other's activity and provide their counterpart with consistent advice and guidance.

SO2: Stakeholders support the objectives of the project and when leaders are seen as fair and the institutions as effective, they embrace it.

During the various interactions the evaluator has had with stakeholders, they have systematically embraced the idea of the creation of inclusive institutions. They have indicated that they require two things, leaders that are perceived as fair and unbiased, and secondly institutions that deliver services and address grievances. In districts where MOIFAR has appointed people that are perceived as fair and unbiased within the community progress in terms of the creation of the district council has gone more smoothly. Generally, the appointed district leaders end up being elected.

SO3: More careful attention must be placed to "hand-over" from stabilization to institutional development.

As mentioned in previous chapter, more careful attention needs to be placed on smoothening out a district's "graduation" from a stabilization program to an institutional development program. This entails working on four elements: first better defining the scope of each project with stabilization focused on addressing root causes of conflict and polarization and the institutional development focused on functioning administrative institutions and basic service delivery. Second, standardizing processes, terminologies and other elements of administration that can ensure continuity in supporting the district's maturation process. Third clearly and transparently determining the criteria that are used to move from one type of project to another and fourth ensuring that information and data and programming is communicated and shared.

SO4: The government seems committed to the objectives of the project.

The creation of functioning institutions capable to deliver services is clearly an objective which the government shares both at FMS and federal level. There is a certain variance in moving in the direction of greater inclusion of women in the political arena and in decision-making positions in certain districts, especially those where women have little access to formal education at the secondary and tertiary level. Similarly, the government is committed to bringing in more young people into the political arena and the development of local district councils is an excellent opportunity. There is a significant challenge in bringing people with disabilities into the process. This, however, is especially important as war, famine and malnutrition are contributing to increase the number of people with disability in the communities.

The project used resources to provide stakeholders with trainings and opportunities to develop capacity. While implementation of these activities has been sometimes a challenge, the main difficulty appears in retaining this talent given the high rate of turnover both within the district councils and in the newly formed district administrations.

The impact of this turnover can be mitigated by reviewing training delivery mode to ensure that the training is readily available. Training modules for incoming project staff should be developed and be available to incoming staff by resorting to online training and mentoring and by taking a proactive approach to ensuring that staff is more quickly and effectively onboarded.
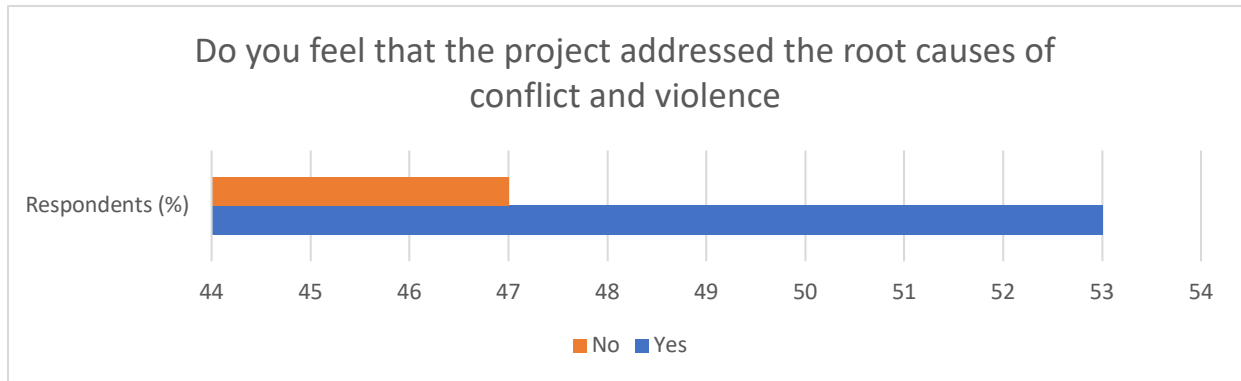
6. IMPACT

The evaluation assessed the extent to which the intervention has generated or is expected to generate significant positive or negative, intended, or unintended, higher-level effects. Given the challenges in implementation, the evaluator considers that the impact has been minimal. This assessment is consistent with the feedback received in the online survey[22] which considered that the project had not significantly impacted the situation on the ground. The survey respondents their assessment of the project, a slight majority considered the results somewhat positive or positive.
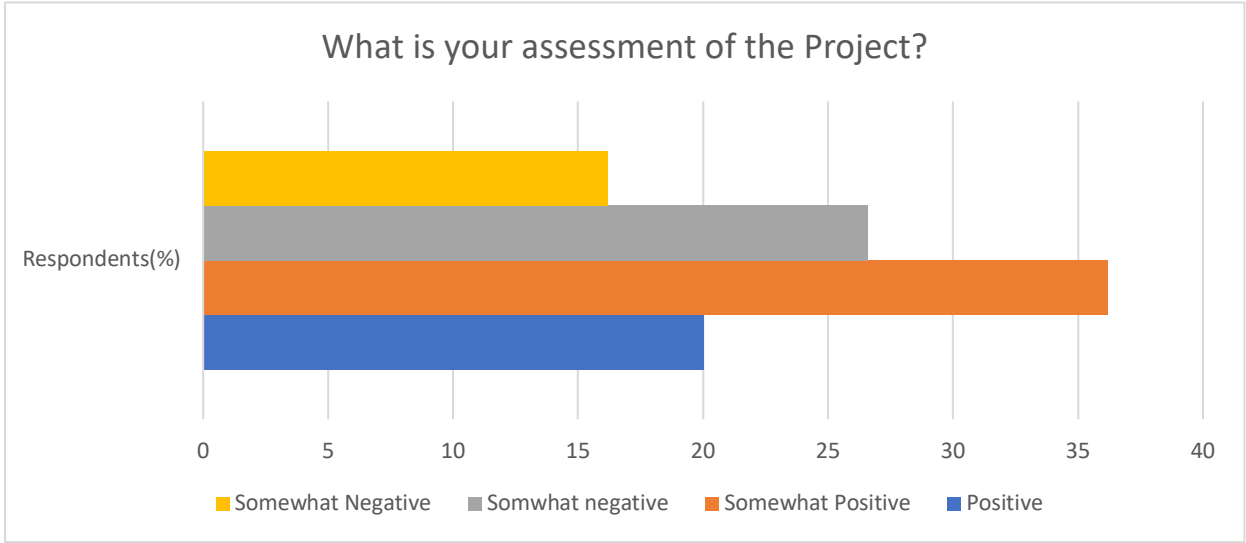
Similarly, a slight majority of respondents indicated that in their opinion the project contributed to addressing the roots causes of conflict and instability.

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[22] The online survey was created by the evaluator and reviewed by stakeholders at inception. It was translated in Somali and sent out to over 125 people representing the federal government, the federal member states, international development partners and civil society. Participation to the survey has been low, with 15 people responding. While the participation rate is low, and therefore its findings should not be considered conclusive, they nonetheless provide a data point which can be used to support information received from other sources.

Do you feel that the project addressed the root causes of conflict and violence

Respondents (%)

| 44 | 45 | 46 | 47 | 48 | 49 | 50 | 51 | 52 | 53 | 54 |

No Yes

When addressing the achievements of the project, respondents mentioned raising awareness regarding the role of local governemnts, but were much more circumspect in attributing the project a role in improving public services, improving transparency in the use of resources, resolving issues which contributed to conflict and fostering better relations within the community.

What do you think were the main achievements of the project

It promoted a better understanding of what the government does and especially the role of local…

It generated more public services to concerned populations

It enabled a more transparent use of resources (less corruption)

It assisted in resolving some of the issues which contributed to conflict in the district

If fostered better relations between different groups within the community

It contributed to improving the security situation

| 0 | 2 | 4 | 6 | 8 | 10 | 12 | 14 |

I DON'T KNOW/I HAVE NO OPINION– STRONGLY DISAGREE– DISAGREE– AGREE– STRONGLY AGREE–

Moreover, many considered that the creation of district councils was the necessary condition to receive funding from international development partners. This is not an indication of ownership of the project in the communities in which it operated.

> *District Council formation is the only way we can get money from the donors. – District Council Chair*

Given all that is discussed above, and in the absence of a clear strategy for future interventions, the evaluation concludes that at this stage, **sustainability of project achievements is unlikely, and its impact is limited.**

Nonetheless, with some limited design changes and a significant increase in oversight and management capacity, this type of project remains highly relevant, if not essential, to ensure the continued stabilization of Somali territory in its ongoing struggle against Al-Shabaab.

7. CONCLUSIONS

The evaluation concludes that the project did not meet its development objectives. While it is generally relevant, it falls short on all other evaluation dimensions: efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability of project implementation and impact. The program was implemented in very difficult circumstances, which led to uncertainty for all practical purposes which immobilized stakeholders for protracted periods. This is certainly one of the elements that have contributed to this disappointing outcome. The experience, however, highlighted weaknesses in design but especially in implementation, namely:

- Lack of capacity in the ability of Implementing agencies at all levels to monitor and encourage progress in a difficult environment.
- Lack of agility in changing course considering difficult circumstances.

This assessment does not mean that similar stabilization operations which incorporate the important lessons from both S2SI and S2SII cannot be successful in Somalia. On the contrary, the evaluator remains convinced of their relevance and their utility in piloting innovative initiatives, whether in terms of content and project governance, which unfortunately remains a key weakness of these types of initiatives.

7.1 Principal Conclusions

The evaluation has three principal recommendations:

First, treat a stabilization project as the initial step in the institutional development process. While peace and stabilization activities are distinct in both content and scope from institutional development and governance activities, it is important to note that what happens prior to the formalization of institutions is as important as what occurs after as effective stabilization seems to lead to smoother institutional development. This has operational implications in terms of who leads stabilization operations and how the institutional development component is addressed, but also the sequencing of activities and the evolution from stabilization to institutional development.

Second, a high level of coordination and cooperation is required for this type of intervention to achieve results.
This is a complex project, with many moving parts and multiple stakeholders who have varying levels of awareness and experience in managing these operations. Implementing agencies and development partners must maintain a consistent and unified messaging around project activities if they are to succeed.

Third, implementing agencies must have the capacity to implement the agenda.
While recourse to the National window may have a positive impact in reducing the cumbersome bureaucracy around disbursements of funds, it is important to recognize that the capacity of the implementing agency to provide substantive thematic support must also be monitored. This means taking a proactive approach to maintain effective oversight and technical assistance

support to the implementing partner. In plain language, national window projects at this stage of institutional development require more technical assistance and oversight than traditionally financed projects, not less.

Operational Agility is as important than resource availability in FCV-affected environments. Carrying out a stabilization/institutional development project in a volatile, quickly changing environment requires that the project is capable to receive and absorb information regarding the situation on the ground and be flexible enough to adjust implementation according to circumstances. This has operational implications in terms of the governance structure that projects of this kind should adopt.

7.2 Evaluation Dimension-Specific Recommendations

The evaluation can provide a number of evaluation dimension specific recommendations. We list them below:

7.2.1 Relevance

In terms of quality control, it is important to incorporate lessons from experience in the design of a new operation gathered from similar projects implemented by either the same implementing agency or by agencies working in the same thematic space. This could mean multiple organization working together to provide quality control guidance to projects in the same thematic space. A multi-agency peer review, composed of individuals in organizations who have implemented similar projects in similar environments can be easier to achieve than coordination of implementation activities but may create some commonality and experience sharing and increase the level of cooperation among these agencies.

7.2.2 Effectiveness

The evaluation has identified several recommendations that could improve programming of similar operations. Among them:

Documentation of preliminary conflict, political economy analysis, stabilization process, approach, instruments used, and overall implementation experience represent the most important output of stabilization processes.

It is important to recognize that stabilization programs are based on imperfect information and rely on assumptions that may or may not be universally true in practice. In this context, the preliminary analysis that has been carried out, the approach that was used in each district, the sequencing of activities, and the perceived impact that the activities have had in each localities represents a fundamental output of these types of interventions, which can be used by other projects working in the stabilization-institutional development nexus to inform the design and improve the programming. It is not only important to carry out the initial investigation and

analysis, but also to frequently updated it and complete it. The information that is generated by these programs can be fundamental in tailoring subsequent activities. The evaluator notes that by focusing on improving this information base, by encouraging implementors to develop good records, provide them tools (such as questionnaire templates, for example) and encouraging frequent discussion and update of the findings, the program will develop more agility to tailor its intervention and the program will generate knowledge that can be used to improve the effectiveness of follow-on programs.

Revisit timeframe and resources required to develop for effective institutions on which to anchor peace and stability.

There is a general tendency to overestimate the pace of institutional development under normal circumstances. This is even more acute in post-conflict situation where this element is seen as a determinant first-step in the path away from extremely fragility. While it is possible, with extensive foreign support and the use of consultants to create a functioning institution, the capacity for this institution to provide anchor efforts for peace and stabilization must be greatly reassessed. A recent review of US stabilization support intervention points to one to five years as a suitable timeframe for stabilization interventions some indicating that in fact this is much closer to seven years. The S2S experience seems to support such evidence. Overall, those districts which began their activity under the project under S2SI were much more likely to have achieved district formation than those who began under S2SII. A more realistic timeframe for intervention and perhaps a narrower focus could potentially strengthen the institutions that are being supported, by reducing the pressure they feel to execute without being capable of doing so.

Conduct a mid-term evaluation of the project

The conduct of a mid-term evaluation can be used to effectively reframe the implementation of the project and the modalities of the intervention. It catalyzes the attention of project stakeholders and generally impulses projects which have hit a wall. This is especially relevant for projects which are operating in circumstances outside its control and accordingly unforeseen at the time of project preparation.

The mid-term evaluation need not be an elaborate exercise, and can be internal or external. Either way, but it must be sober and constructive, focusing on how to address implementation challenges and dysfunctions to ensure a smoother implementation. Moreover, whenever possible it should be done in cooperation with other projects and institutions operating in the same space with the objective of standardizing reporting, ensuring ongoing complementarity of interventions and suitable conceptual demarcation of activities. Even in short term projects a mid-term evaluation process conducted effectively and focused on implementation can have a major impact in achieving project objectives.

7.2.3   Efficiency

Governance arrangements are essential to the efficiency of a stabilization and early institutional development program.

A lot of effort is placed to ensure that governance arrangement adequately represent stakeholders. This is important and adequate. But equal attention should be paid at the design stage to ensure that these governance arrangements work and that they are sustainable. This means determining at an early stage whether members of the governance structure are able to participate constructively in the monitoring of the project, and if not that their functions be delegated to individuals that can suitably and promptly provide the strategic guidance that projects of this kind require.

There needs to be clear accountability among stakeholders for providing technical assistance and oversight to the project.
While implementation circumstances were extremely difficult, the evaluator cannot highlight that the lack of clarity in the distribution of responsibilities for the management and oversight of this project have contributed to its lack of success. From the development partners side, there were multiple intervening partners, but none felt they had the responsibility to provide oversight on substance and technical assistance to implementing partners. This is a situation that must be avoided and could have been addressed had the Project Board been a proactive overseer of project activities.

Additionally, in the opinion of the evaluator, UNDP from the development partner side, should maintain the leadership of these kind of projects, since it will be responsible to follow-up into the early stages of institutional development. Additionally, UNDP should have the responsibility to provide technical assistance on substantive issues pertaining to institutional development on a sustained basis and conduct policy dialogue and provide strategic support to government agencies, such as MOIFAR and the MOI of FMS who are developing such capacity.

7.2.4 Sustainability

Stabilization programs and local institution development programs should be seen as a continuum in the same operational space, but clear definition of boundaries and modalities for transition is key.

While the reality of the current environment is that activities are financed by stand-alone projects and programs, it is undeniable that S2S, other stabilization programs and JPLG would benefit from increased cooperation and coordination. This segmentation is not only present within the development financed activities, but permeates Somali institutions, such as MOIFAR, which internalize this "*siloization*" and weaken already fragile emerging institutions. Additionally, strengthening cooperation increases opportunities for economies of scale and would enable a more systematic and complete sharing of information, documentation, and experience. The

project recognizes the need to strengthen coordination between projects as an important element of success, yet during implementation has difficulty following through.

It is important to view that assisting Governments in governance and institutional development activities is a long-term engagement which requires multiple instruments that work sometimes in parallel, other times sequentially and are managed sometimes by different teams or institutions.

Whenever possible, at preparation, significant effort should be made to spell out how projects in the same space tie into each other and to anticipate when and how cooperation is likely and how it ought to be addressed. This can reduce costs and maximize impact for the recipient. Moving forward, it will be important to emphasize this cooperation and ensure that projects, especially within the purview of a single implementor focus more attention and energy on how to achieve cooperation, looking at experience as an opportunity to have a more coherent and standardized approach and implementation arrangements.

The S2S experience once again highlights the importance of careful coordination between similar operations to reduce the time and capacity requirement to monitor projects and to reduce the need to allocate limited resources to supervise similar programs.

Recognize and address the psychological elements that drive polarization.

The psychological elements of conflict and by extension of conflict resolution are dimensions that are difficult to capture in both stabilization and institutional development projects, yet they are of paramount importance. There is mounting evidence that political dialogue breaks down when there is excessive polarization. Polarization, according to recent research on the matter seems to involve three separate but related dimensions: dehumanization, dislike, and disagreement all of which contribute to reduce the opportunities for a fruitful dialogue between communities and effective governing arrangements at the local level. As polarization grows, the perception of the divide between communities grows above and beyond to what the actual divide is. As populations recognize that there are more commonalities than they had expected, there is more of an incentive to cooperate and it is at this point that forum, like district council are more likely to be formed and work efficiently. Addressing the different dimensions of polarization requires raising the awareness within communities themselves that their perception of the other is in fact exaggerated and the commonalities are wider than it is expected. Addressing polarization will also require that the project address trauma and carries out activities that encourage forgiveness and healing.

There are ways to document progress along these dimensions that make up polarization, and these elements of psychology, should be monitored to decide how fast to proceed along the institutional development continuum and where to continue investing resources. Perception surveys should be carried out in a systematic way over time at the district level, (every three months) to document changes in psychological dimensions and provide an evidence base for graduation from stabilization to development (institution building). These can be administered relatively cheaply and quickly with the appropriate preparation.

Consider developing an Institutional Development Team to oversee exit-strategy or hand-over process.

This project clearly demonstrates the importance of getting the nexus between stabilization and institutional development right. This requires a careful consideration of the local circumstances and those of the different projects concerned to make sure that this process occurs smoothly. To do so, within the UN system, or more practically within UNDP, an institutional development team with a multi-dimensional makeup could be tasked to oversee how to proceed in achieving a smooth handover between projects that are different in nature (such as stabilization and institutional development) and provide guidance to individual project teams on how to tailor those activities. At minimum, this team could include an institutional development specialist, a psychologist familiar with conflict and reconciliation, gender, and inclusion specialist.